

# **GOD and the MILLIONAIRES**

**by Anise**

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# GOD and the MILLIONAIRES

*with best wishes  
Anna Louise Strong  
Mar 6 1953*

by Anise

The "Anise Ragged Verse" ran as daily commentary in the Seattle Union Record, 1918-21. Widely copied, even in other countries, it was chief cause for my invitation to Soviet Russia in 1921. The "Reds" of those days were chiefly I.W.W.'s on the West Coast, "Debs-Socialists" in the East, Non-Partisan Leaguers of the farm belt; the American Communist Party was just being born. But there have always been "Reds"; note "That New Seditious Sect", i.e., the early Christians. For we move forward through age-long struggle between what some West Coast Indians called "God and the Millionaires". There are more scientific terms for this conflict; but I use theirs as title, in deference to our first dispossessed Americans.

From over 600 verses I choose 30 as of interest today. Some detail was changed in "Thanksgiving" and "The Turn of the Year" when these were republished in 1950,

ANNA LOUISE STRONG,  
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## God And The Millionaires

Into the halls of government  
In Ottawa  
Came Indians  
From the West Coast  
To complain  
That they were being arrested  
For catching salmon  
In the river  
That ran  
Through their reservation.

Once  
All the land was theirs,  
But now  
A little space  
Was picked out for them  
By white men,  
Yet, even here,  
They could not hunt nor fish  
In the old manner  
Because of white men's law.

Their leader spoke:  
"Our Heavenly Father  
Put salmon in our rivers  
To feed the Red Men  
Before the White Man came,  
But now  
White Man Millionaires,  
Who can afford  
Much better food than salmon,  
Have come to take our fish

To make money.  
Never will there be peace  
Till the land  
Comes back to those  
Who live on it;  
Till the hunting and fishing  
Come back to those  
Who eat the game and fish,  
Even as God gave it us  
From the beginning."

The Ottawa Government  
Expressed SYMPATHY  
For the Indians  
But did nothing for them,  
For God and the millionaires  
Seemed to have different ideas  
On disposal of salmon  
And water and land;  
And government inclines  
To the millionaires.

But  
God has a reputation  
For long life  
And staying qualities,  
And so  
In the end  
This conflict  
As to who owns the earth  
Should come out  
Differently.

## Savages

### I

It used to be the custom  
Of certain savage tribes  
To kill off  
OLD PEOPLE,  
When their days of hunting  
And of useful work  
Were over.  
When they could no more  
Keep up  
With the strenuous life  
Of their tribe,  
They were quietly  
Disposed of  
And sometimes eaten,  
Especially in times  
Of food-shortage.  
These folk  
Were clearly SAVAGES.  
They had not yet learned  
To cooperate  
In subduing nature,  
To build a tribe  
That could protect  
Its members.  
But . . .  
In the course of time  
They learned this lesson  
Or were pushed off the earth  
By civilized folk.

### II

Yesterday  
The body of a watchman  
Was found in our Sound,  
An old man,  
A supposed suicide.  
His pockets  
Held only a pawn-ticket  
And a bank-book,  
Showing all savings withdrawn.  
His days of hunting  
Were over,  
His days of useful labor.  
He could no more keep up  
With the strenuous life  
Of our tribe,  
So he was just disposed of,  
By a newer, crueler method,  
That made him  
His own executioner.  
The folk permitting this  
Are clearly SAVAGES,  
Who have not yet learned  
To build a society  
That can protect its members,  
But  
In the course of time,  
We will learn it,  
Or be pushed off the earth  
By civilized folk.

# Civilized

## I

All day long  
We followed the trail  
On the ridges,  
Looking far down  
On the breaking surf  
On the ribbon roads  
On the quiet towns,  
Till, just as evening fell,  
We dropped to the valley  
And found our ferry-boat  
On the tossing waves  
Of the bay.  
Then,  
As we came to the city,  
There flashed  
Out of the purple dusk  
Of the nearing shore  
Golden lights  
High  
On the dark heavens,  
Announcing  
Somebody's OATS  
And Somebody's PICKLES,  
And so I knew we had reached  
CIVILIZATION.

## II

I do not know  
Whether people  
Under those lights  
Are happier  
Than savages were;  
I do not know  
Whether they have learned  
To be kinder;  
I do not know  
Whether they love Beauty,  
Justice,  
And little Children  
More than the Red Men did  
Who camped on these shores.  
I do not know  
Whether they are wiser  
In living,  
But I know  
They are CIVILIZED!  
For they have learned to take  
The lightning of heaven  
And the power of wild water  
Rushing down mountains,  
And make of them signs  
For the selling of pickles.

## The Old-Timer

"It used to be"  
Said the Old Timer,  
"Men left their shacks  
Unlocked  
All through the hills.  
Far on the lone trail  
You'd find a cabin  
With bunks and stove  
And maybe bedding,  
And on the door  
A sign of WELCOME,  
Saying only:  
'Leave things clean—in order'.  
Nothing was molested  
In those days  
But now . . .  
The civilization of cities  
Has reached the hills.  
It is not safe any more  
To leave your cabin.  
Why, somebody  
Went last winter  
To a ranger's shack,  
And burned the bunks  
And tables and chairs  
For firewood,  
And smashed the stove

When they left."

"Have men grown worse", I asked  
"With the coming of cities"?

"Conflict among them  
Has grown," he said.  
"The pioneer men were equal,  
COMRADES  
In the war with Nature.  
The shack of one  
Was like the shack of another,  
A sacred shelter of men  
Won  
From the wilderness.  
But now . . .  
Men are unequal.  
Some of them own the land  
And others wander.  
Out of this comes division  
And war.  
No man's shelter is safe  
Till all men  
Have shelter;  
No man's home is protected  
Till all men  
Have home."

## The Things

When you are out of a job  
And hungry,  
Say to yourself:  
There's **NOBODY**  
I can blame.  
It wasn't  
The spite of the Boss;  
It wasn't even  
The Associated Industries  
Attacking Labor.  
It was just this:  
My fellow-workers and I  
Worked so well  
With such fine machines,  
That we made more goods  
Than we can use.  
No . . .  
Of course we could **USE** it,  
But we haven't wages enough  
To **BUY** what we made.  
So the extra goods  
Piled up  
—Suits and shoes and food—  
Till now  
There is surplus  
And **WE**,  
The **PEOPLE**,  
Aren't needed any more  
To make **THINGS**.  
So . . .  
It's soup-kitchens

And flop-houses for us,  
Until we are needed again.  
We used to dream  
Ours was a world of **MEN**,  
And **THINGS** were valued only  
As they served **MEN**,  
But now we see  
It is a world of **THINGS**  
And **MEN** are valued only  
For making **THINGS**.  
When all the things are made  
That can find market,  
The men are told:  
"You are not wanted now."  
Perhaps their wives want them,  
Their children want them,  
Their friends want them  
But the **THINGS**  
Don't want them  
And that's what counts.  
And so we wait and hunger  
Because  
We raised too much food.  
And so we shiver because  
We made too much clothing.  
This is what men call  
The **WAGE-SYSTEM**.  
After a while  
When we have hungered enough  
The **THINGS**  
May need us again.



## The Reservoir

The Manufacturers  
Have asked Congress  
To let in lots of immigrants  
"Because American industry  
Needs a larger reservoir  
Of labor."

I think that word "reservoir"  
Is so expressive.  
It makes me see  
A great, big oblong lake,  
With steep mud sides,  
Like we have in the Park,  
Filled  
Not with water  
But with men and women  
And children,  
All huddled together  
As if they had been  
POURED IN,  
To wait till the tap turns,  
Letting them out to a JOB.  
Blond faces,  
Swarthy faces,  
Old, bearded faces,  
Young, eager faces,  
Straight, strong bodies  
And crippled bodies,  
All waiting  
In the reservoir,

Till someone needs  
A man's arm,  
Or a woman's hand,  
Or the clumsy fingers  
Of children,  
Someone, of course, with money—  
The WRENCH  
That alone can open the tap.

It is convenient  
For the turners of the tap  
To have lots of water  
In the reservoir,  
For it gives good pressure  
When they want it.  
They need not be careful  
About wasting water;  
They can let it run and run.  
But  
What will the folks do  
In the reservoir  
While waiting?  
Will they lie as quiet  
As water?  
Well—  
Even the quietest water  
Has broken great walls  
When there was too much  
Pressure.

## North Star at Gary

### I

Have you seen  
The NORTH STAR  
At Gary?  
Since the town was built  
The stars  
Of the northern sky  
Have been hidden  
By the red glow  
Of furnaces.  
Oh, Gary gave her workers  
Many lights:  
The hot light of steel,  
The flaring light of streets,  
The weary, welcome lights  
Of workers' homes,  
But never the white light  
Of the North Star  
For night by night  
And year by year  
The steel-mills roared  
As if forever.  
But just the other evening  
In the steel strike,  
When the officials  
Claimed "operation as usual,"  
The union men replied—  
Pointing to the northern sky,  
Where the red furnace-glow  
Has paled to mist—  
"We can see  
The North Star  
At Gary"

### II

Can you see  
The FREEDOM STAR  
At Gary?  
Since the town was built  
The Star of Freedom  
Has been hidden  
By the fires of Gary's mills.  
Judge Gary gave the people  
Many lights:  
Broad streets,  
Neat houses,  
Model schools,  
Welfare workers  
Who went to people's homes,  
To teach them how to cook,  
To wash the children's faces—  
But he never gave  
The WHITE LIGHT  
Of FREEDOM.  
Now just the other day  
In the steel strike  
When the crowds of men  
Walked up and down the streets,  
You could see at last  
The FREEDOM STAR  
In their faces,  
Shining  
Through the smoke  
Of Gary.

## What Monument ?

It was only  
A bunch of statistics  
From our State Safety Board,  
Published,  
Briefly read  
And then forgotten,  
Except by women and children  
In lumber towns  
To whom each man was more  
Than a figure on a list.  
Let us pause with them  
For a moment  
Before we forget;  
Let us pause  
In memory  
Of 4000 men  
Maimed last year  
In the lumber industry  
Of our state,  
Of a hundred and twenty-eight  
**KILLED**  
By the fall of trees,  
By faulty rigging,  
By wornout cables,  
By explosion of boilers,

By logging railroad wrecks,  
Dying  
Far out in the woods  
From undressed wounds  
As a soldier  
In No Man's Land  
Dies before help comes.  
One hundred and twenty-eight  
Times  
The logging-trains came in,  
Swinging  
Through the firwood,  
With a flat car  
Bearing a body,  
And a black cloth over it.  
Let us pause  
When the state reports come,  
We who erect  
Monuments  
To soldiers dead in war,  
Who died, we say,  
To protect our homes,—  
What monument shall we erect  
To the men who died  
To build them?

## Rotten Foundations

I was planning  
To build me a house  
And a friend  
Who is a builder  
Warned me  
Of the tricks of the trade.  
He told me  
Of ready-to-wear houses  
Built in a bunch  
By a cheap contractor  
And apt to be just shells.  
The latest trick,  
They say,  
Is to build full basements,  
Supposed  
To give solid foundation,  
But because cement  
Is expensive,  
They make a few solid piers  
While the rest of the wall,  
That LOOKS solid,  
Is thin cement  
On naked earth.  
This saves  
A lot of money  
For the contractor,

But as soon as the house  
Begins to settle,  
It's ruined.

So I said:  
"What  
Do you think would happen,  
If some of these days  
When the building trades  
Strike  
For higher wages,  
They should arise  
In the pride of their craft  
And strike  
For the right  
To work ONLY  
On decent, honest jobs?"

"Oh, hush," he said,  
"It's bad enough  
When these fellows strike  
For their own good,  
But if they should strike  
For the good of the public  
Everyone knows that's—  
BOLSHEVISM."

## What Is The Matter?

"We never saw so many  
Jumpy people,"  
Said our Labor Delegates,  
Returning from Washington.  
"You meet them in hotels,  
On Pullman cars  
And even  
In halls of government.  
They are afraid  
To look under the bed  
For fear of finding  
A Bolshevik!  
They are SURE  
That our Labor Movement  
SEETHES with Revolution,  
And that they are saved  
From red rebellion,  
With blood running in gutters,  
Only  
By the LAW'S vigilance  
In jailing REDS.  
We told them:  
'We  
Are representatives of Labor.  
We never saw those folks  
With torch and bomb'

But they assured us,  
Whispering,  
We didn't know what we said.  
We couldn't convince them  
At all.  
So at last  
We wondered:  
WHAT is the matter  
With these folks?  
Are their own hearts  
So given to VIOLENCE  
That they think ours are?  
Are their brains  
So muddled by HEADLINES  
That they cannot see  
Plain facts?  
Or are they  
Just groggy  
From rich food  
Of WAR-PROFITS  
Poisoning their intestines?  
What  
Is out of order in them?  
Their brains?  
Their consciences?  
Or their digestion?"

## What In A Name?

It was a good scheme  
But they called it  
A bad name  
And thus killed it.

### I

The War Department  
Started shop committees  
In Rock Island Arsenal.  
Last September  
They reported  
Remarkable improvement  
In efficiency  
Resulting  
From those committees.  
Then somebody called it  
"Sovietism"  
And that finished it,  
For the War Department  
Felt obliged to give it up.

### II

In Leavenworth jail,  
They tried self-government  
Among prisoners,  
Trying to make MEN  
Out of wrecks,  
Instead of wrecks out of men.

The system worked;  
The discipline was better;  
The prisoners almost learned  
To govern themselves  
Which is the first lesson  
In manhood.  
Then somebody called it:  
"The prison SOVIET!"  
And some Senators  
Denounced the War Department,  
So  
The self-government stopped.  
And the prisoners  
Are caged beasts again,  
Not learning any more  
To be men.

### III

Who was the guy that said:  
"What's in a name?"  
I guess he never heard  
Of Soviets  
Or Communists.  
These names  
Have magic power:  
They can be used to damn  
ANY good thing.

## School Board Candidate

The audience asks:

"Do you think the teacher's day  
Should be lengthened?"

He replies: "I

Am an AMERICAN."

We ask: "Do you believe  
In the merit system?"

He answers: "The Labor Temple  
Has no right

To nominate candidates."

We ask: "Will you have phones  
In every school?"

He passionately shouts:

"The Central Labor Council  
Is run by REDS!"

We ask: "Should teachers  
Have a voice

In determining

Educational policy?"

He thunders: "The time has come  
When citizens must choose

Between Americanism

And Communism."

We ask: "Should teachers  
Control their own time

Outside school hours?"

And: "Should school clinics  
Be increased?"

But all he answers is:

"The Bolsheviks

Have devastated Russia."

We inquire timidly:

"Should teachers be allowed

A regular representative

At all Board meetings?"

He gives but one supreme reply,

Covering, like charity,

His multitude of sins:

"I am 100 percent American!"

Thus

Are we perfectly answered,

Our ignorance enlightened

By his intelligence.

For we are just

Plain workers

While HE

Is the businessmen's candidate

To run our School Board.

We note his replies

Reverently,

And only wish

They might be heard

By everyone in town,

So that ALL might know

As WE do

Whom NOT to vote for.

## The Sedition Trial

Oh, one stood facing the judge with dawn in his eyes,  
And one sat quietly stroking the hand of his wife,  
And one was nervous, fidgeting in his chair,  
Till he caught the eye of a comrade, and smiled.  
And all were worn with jail and night-long thought,  
And pale with hope deferred of a world set free.

The judge sat sleek, thin-lipped and hard,  
Well satisfied with the praises of the press,  
Dividing by habit all humanity  
Into those who conform—and criminals.  
He flamed into patriot passion  
On Freedom and the glory of Democracy,  
On Loyalty to a country's cause.  
Surely those words had meaning,  
Yet he seemed a savage mumbling an unknown God.  
For he hated these men's "Freedom",  
And their cry: "For the Peace of the Peoples",  
And their Loyalty to the world's workers.  
And bitterest was his hate that they should question  
The Freedom and Democracy HE gave them,  
The Loyalty he and his kind demanded.  
At the end, conscious of reporters:  
"Fix the bail high", he said,  
"Lest they escape to aid their country's enemies."

And men who built their hopes into their nation,  
Who gave toil and received poverty,  
Who gave high hopes in Freedom  
And received jail,  
Took quietly his sneers without redress.

Oh, ye who use law to murder man's faith in justice,  
Ye breeders of bitterness,  
Brewers of hate,  
Who sit so sleekly insulting the seekers for light,  
The iron yoke of despots is not so galling to men  
As your oratory of Freedom!



## "Not Prejudiced"

The woman juror  
Sat in the ninth seat  
And the questioning began.  
"I know," she said  
"That's these REDS  
Plot MURDER,  
But I'm not PREJUDICED.  
I know they advocate  
VIOLENCE;  
I have known it  
For ten years.  
But you can't call it  
Prejudice  
Because I have a REASON  
For hating them.  
I would like to BLOT OUT  
That organization,  
But I'm not prejudiced  
Against ALL its members.  
Maybe some of them  
Are sorry  
They joined it,  
And committed those crimes  
And got in this fix.  
I can give them

A perfectly fair trial  
For I'm not prejudiced  
Against THESE defendants.  
—Lots of young men  
Get roped  
Into that organization  
Without knowing  
Its criminal aims.  
I'd make them cut it out  
By jailing them if need be  
For their own good,  
And if one of them  
Was an ORGANIZER,  
Maybe that would affect  
My estimate of him.  
But I expect  
To rely on EVIDENCE  
In convicting them  
So you can't call me  
PREJUDICED."

Thereupon  
The judge accepted her  
As a proper juror.  
(Montesano Trial, January, 1920)

## A Piece of Freight

Lost!  
For three years in jail!  
Without trial  
Or indictment,  
Quite forgotten  
By the high officials  
And the world,  
John Domason,  
Dalmation by birth,  
And an I.W.W.,  
Was discovered  
At the immigration station  
In Boston.  
They found him  
By accident  
For if he ever had friends  
Who cared,  
They had never known  
Where to inquire.  
Not a single letter  
Had come to him  
In the three years  
While he was shifted  
From jail to jail  
As a piece of freight,  
Whose record is lost,  
Is shifted.  
Nobody knew

HOW  
He was forgotten,  
But high officials  
Are busy  
And smaller ones  
Are careless,  
And the time of the courts  
Is crowded,  
So,  
Day dragged into day,  
Week into week,  
And every day  
Was twenty-four hours  
Of waiting;  
Every week  
Was seven days gone forever!  
He had the luck to be found  
After three years.  
The assistance commissioner,  
Learning of his existence,  
Released him, saying:  
"We shall be glad  
To be rid of him."

This is what we call  
"The Department  
Of Justice."

## The "Joy-Bringer"

In the iron cage  
Of San Quentin,  
They call her:  
"The Joy-Bringer."  
All the unhappy women,  
Who live there in the shadow,  
Paying some penalty  
Of broken law,  
Look up  
When she passes.  
The dazed Italian mother,  
Half-frantic for her children,  
Ignorant, primitive,  
Who helped her husband  
Abduct a young girl  
And was imprisoned for it;  
The middleaged woman,  
Mentally deficient,  
Who killed  
The man that assaulted her;  
All the broken waste  
Tossed by society  
Into this cold, steel box  
To be out of the way,  
To wait  
Till the hand of death or time  
Opens the box again——  
All of them

Watch for her coming,  
Look up, smile, become human  
In her presence.  
She is the one soul  
Brought here  
Not because of weakness,  
But because of strength,  
Marie Equi of Portland,  
A woman physician,  
Imprisoned  
For speaking her mind  
In war-time.  
Even here—in the iron box—  
She remains living.  
She refuses  
To become a piece  
Of dead wreckage.  
She studies medical books,  
She talks with the women,  
She brings to them cheer,  
Healing and help,  
Making them believe  
Once more  
That they are HUMAN,  
That they are SOULS,  
Instead of forgotten waste  
In an iron box.

## Anonymous

A letter  
Came to our office,  
Intended to be published  
In our "Mailbag,"  
It said:  
"WHY  
Are profiteers  
Still out of jail,  
While a man like Gene Debs  
Is still in?"  
It was signed:  
"An American born and bred."

I wanted to answer him:  
"The reason, my brother,  
Is contained  
In the way  
You sign that letter:  
ANONYMOUS!  
If everyone  
Who felt like you  
Had said their thoughts  
And signed them,  
Had stood right up  
In their own names

And given their views  
In wartime,  
Instead of hiding  
In the general bunch  
Of "Americans born and bred."  
No! . . .  
I've nothing against you.  
How do I know  
How many children you have,  
Or the wife,  
Or the sick mother  
Or whatever it was  
That bound you,  
That made you unwilling  
To give your name.  
But if ALL of us  
Had the nerve  
Of our convictions,  
Debs would be OUT  
And the profiteers IN."

I wanted to answer him  
That way  
But he hadn't sent an address  
For an answer!

## That New Seditious Sect

It is very old  
This problem of sedition.  
Nearly two thousand years ago  
Governor Pliny wrote  
To the Emperor Trajan  
Of a "new seditious sect"  
That troubled the Roman Empire  
With the "good news"  
Of a "Kingdom of God"  
Where high and low  
Should be no more,  
For all men should be brothers.  
(A doctrine exciting to slaves,  
But unapproved by emperors.)

And thus he wrote:  
"Pliny to Emperor Trajan  
Wishes health . . .  
In the examination  
Of these Christians,  
I have experienced doubt  
Whether to make distinction  
Of those that are young  
From those that are hardened,  
Whether to offer pardon  
If any repent,  
Or whether the guilt  
Of flagrant Christianity  
Cannot be wiped out  
Even by repentance.  
Shall mere membership  
Be counted a crime,  
However innocent the man

May be in other matters,  
Or must the crimes we hold  
Against the organization,  
Be proved anew  
Against each individual? . . .  
For informations  
Pour in against multitudes  
Of every age and order,  
Since the contagion  
Of this superstition  
Spreads through cities  
And villages even to farms."

Now Trajan was a wise emperor.  
He answered Pliny:  
"Do not go out of your way  
To hunt these folk  
With informers.  
If any are found and convicted  
Let them be executed.  
If any renounce their sect,  
Let them be pardoned.  
But pay no attention  
To anonymous accusations  
For this  
Is against the principles  
Of my government."

Yes, it is very old  
—This "Red Menace"—  
But not all rulers are  
As just as Trajan.

## Dynamite!

Lost, strayed or stolen  
Down in Chicago,  
One hundred and twenty-five  
thousand

BIBLES,  
Belonging  
To the Prison Bible Society.  
The Chicago police  
Are hunting them  
And many theories  
Are advanced.

Some think they were taken  
By a patriotic squad  
Of the American Legion,  
Who heard that lecturer say:  
"The Bible  
Has DYNAMITE in it,  
Enough to blow up  
Our whole social order!"

But others hold  
The Bibles were seized  
And held incommunicado  
As anti-American,  
Because they were first written  
In Hebrew and Greek,  
And have been spread

In over a hundred  
FOREIGN languages!

A third theory  
Is that the Secret Service  
Is examining them  
As seditious literature,  
Because they contain  
That Bolshevik ideology:  
"If a man will not work,  
Neither shall he eat."

Anyway,  
Whoever seized or stole them,  
They should NOT  
Be returned  
To the Prison Bible Society.  
Perhaps it was safe  
To put Bibles in jails  
For ordinary criminals,  
Like thieves  
And murderers;  
But now  
The jails are filled  
With THINKING PEOPLE  
Who should not be trusted  
With BIBLES!

## A Judge on Trial

They asked Judge Lindsay:  
"What do you know  
Of this murder?"  
He replied: "What I know  
Came to me in confidence  
From a boy who trusted me  
As Juvenile Judge."  
They cried: "The LAW  
Demands that you tell us."  
He replied: "A greater law  
Demands my silence."  
They cried: "You make light  
Of our court!"  
"Better so", said he,  
"Than to make light  
Of a boy's trust."  
They shouted: "Jail  
Is the penalty."  
"Even so," said he,  
"I will keep faith  
With the child."

That  
Was Judge Lindsay,  
Who built his whole life-work  
On the children's trust,  
Till they told him things  
They never told their mothers,  
Things

They hardly whispered  
To their gangs,  
Because the "Kid's Judge"  
Was a Confessor,  
Secret and helpful.  
That was how he made  
Strong lives  
Out of broken ones.

No wonder  
He chose jail!  
What else could a man do?  
Better men than he  
Have chosen jail before him.  
Greater men than he  
Will choose jail after him.  
For all of us  
Come  
By one path or another,  
In one cause or another,  
To the place where life offers  
On the one hand  
THREATS  
From the old, old men  
With their musty laws,  
On the other hand  
The CLAIM  
Of the children

## Flags

Hang flags, they cried.  
"Hang crape", you said.  
"The dream for which our fathers died  
Is dead.

"Freedom of speech,  
Of press, of thought—freedoms of which we brag—  
We kill them, and above the grave of each  
We plant—a flag."

Nay—but afar  
The living Freedom calls the sons of men,  
For she will dwell no longer where we are,  
Bound by our little land again.

She claims the world.  
Her feet endure no lesser resting-place.  
Not till our flags—dead symbols of her past—are furled  
Shall we behold her face.



## To Keep The Past On Its Throne

They gave us a fine time  
In New England,  
Showing us all the landmarks  
Of our history.  
We drove out the ancient road  
That Paul Revere followed,  
Riding by night  
To warn those early rebels  
That British troops  
Were coming.  
We saw the steeple  
Of the North Church,  
Where the lantern was hung  
For a signal.  
And we followed  
The twenty-mile track  
Of that old, wild ride  
That started  
Our Revolution!  
Out past Longfellow's home  
And the Washington elm,  
Where Washington took command  
Of our first army,  
Past weather-beaten farms  
Where bullet-marks  
Still showed  
From that old fight.  
We saw the Lexington green  
Where the Minute Men met,  
And the old hotel  
Where they molded bullets  
All that long night

Till the dawn.  
We passed the houses  
Of Hawthorne and Emerson  
And came to the Concord Bridge  
Where they made the stand  
That gave us A NATION.

There, in the old stone wall,  
Was an iron plate:  
"Here lie  
The British soldiers  
That fell at this place,  
They came three thousand miles  
And died  
To keep the past  
Upon its throne."

And I thought how many men,  
Age after age  
And today also,  
Have marched the world over  
And died by millions  
To keep the past on its throne,  
Yet never succeeding—  
For somewhere always,  
By ridge or pass or ford,  
In mine or forest or town,  
They meet  
And are swept to defeat  
By the ragged handful of men  
Who fight  
For the FUTURE!

## Patriotism

### I

Some folks honestly think  
That Patriotism  
Means lynching Reds  
To show your proper horror,  
Loving your country  
Too violently  
To obey her laws  
Of tolerance  
For men whose talk you hate.  
But I think Patriotism  
Means giving justice  
To ALL,  
Even to those to whom  
You fear to give it.

### II

Some folks honestly think  
That Patriotism  
Means shutting your eyes  
To mistakes of officials,  
Reverencing  
All little tag-ends  
Of Government,  
And hitting over the head  
All critics.  
But I think Patriotism  
Means seeing mistakes quickly  
And speaking your mind on them,  
In the high faith  
That our people

Are competent to hear  
All facts and opinions,  
That our country is greater  
Than its temporary rulers  
And can survive the loss  
Of many stupid servants  
Who call themselves  
Government.

### III

Some folks honestly think  
That Patriotism  
Is an emotional jamboree,  
A shouting: "Thank God WE  
Are not as others."  
A braggart thrill  
At colors in a piece of cloth,  
And a license to call names  
At all neighbors.  
But I think Patriotism  
Is a sober, life-long job,  
A hard, high calling:  
To build in this our land  
From sea to sea  
A great FREE PEOPLE,  
Free from prejudice,  
Free from fear,  
A nation of brothers,  
Owning the wealth of the land,  
Sharing fairly its products,  
Brothers to themselves  
And to the whole wide world!

## Mistakenly Dead!

The name of William Wirt  
Is engraved  
On bronze memorial in Akron,  
Sacred to the memory  
Of the dead in France,  
But William Wirt himself  
Is much alive,  
And much annoyed  
At the mistakes they make  
In government records.  
He claims  
There are 2000 ex-soldiers,  
Living and husky,  
But listed officially dead  
By the War Department.  
He wants to start  
A Club of Dead Men  
For all "mistakenly dead."  
I am not sure  
What his club  
Would have as its purpose,  
But I would like to form  
A Club of the Dead  
For those who really died  
In France and Flanders,  
In icy mountains of Italy,  
On sun-struck plains  
Of Gallipoli,  
Who stood knee-deep in mud  
At midnight,

Waiting  
For their last dawn;  
Who lay for days  
Between the lines  
Tortured by thirst,  
Until a merciful bullet  
Brought release;  
Who died in despair  
In prison-camps,  
Or amid groans in hospital,  
Or under gray seas.  
I wish the souls  
Of all those flaming youths  
Who died  
In a war to end war,  
To make earth safe  
For democracy  
Could unite  
In a Club of Dead Men  
To sit in judgment  
On us living,  
On our battlelines,  
Still worldwide,  
On our "peace councils"  
That make no peace.  
I wish they could remind us  
What they died for,  
And ask  
If they too  
Are "mistakenly dead"?

## "Law and Order"

I read in the paper  
From Mexico City:  
"NO CRIME  
Was committed  
In this city  
For the past twenty-four hours.  
Not a single arrest was made  
For a broken law.  
Let us hoist  
The WHITE BANNER,  
Taking pride  
In the good conduct  
Of the law-abiding citizens  
Of our wonderful  
City of Mexico."

Then I recalled  
That Mexico City  
Has one million population,  
Three times as large  
As our Seattle.

And I wondered  
When a day would pass  
In Seattle  
Without a single crime  
Or arrest.

I recalled  
The Fosdick report  
About world crime,  
Which said:  
"America  
Leads all the world  
In disregard of law."

And I wondered  
HOW SOON  
We will have to go over  
To Mexico City  
"To restore  
Law and Order?"

## That White Race

If I were a contemplative  
Hindu philosopher,  
Overlooking  
The wide reaches of time,  
This is what I might say  
About these wars:

"THAT WHITE RACE  
Has been a very restless race,  
Always annoying  
The other races.  
It runs  
To the far corners of earth  
To grab and to hold,  
To rule and subdue.  
Nevertheless,  
It also  
Has had its mission.  
It has made swift ships  
And giant engines,  
It has subdued  
The universe of matter  
To serve mankind.  
It has knit together  
The peoples of earth  
—Even us,  
The conquered peoples—  
By the rapid mail,

By the telegraph,  
By the railway  
And the newspaper.  
It has forced upon us  
With the sword  
The things we were too lazy  
To strive for.  
It has united mankind  
By the bonds of machinery  
But not  
By the bonds of the spirit.  
For that White Race  
Never cherished the soul.  
Even its religion was borrowed  
From us of the East  
And was never followed  
Seriously.  
And now  
That race has finished its task  
And destroys itself  
In a mighty suicide.  
Then WE,  
Of the conquered races,  
Take over the earth  
When the conqueror perishes.  
For the sword has always  
Destroyed the sword,  
And the meek in the end  
Inherit the earth."

## Thanksgiving

I said: "I am thankful  
For sunlight,  
Flooding the meadows  
With morning,  
And for the drowsy rainfall,  
Murmuring sleep to the roofs.  
For starlit silence of mountains,  
For noonday thunder of ocean,  
For shouting of children,  
For patience of mothers,  
For steady labor of men.—  
Thankful that these shall endure  
Throughout all ages  
Under all systems.

Then a mocking devil  
Shrieked: "You—  
With your silly prattle—  
Look over the earth!  
Behold despots  
Exulting in power.  
See where the peasants  
Of Vietnam, Iran and Korea  
Reach out their hands for life  
But die in the flame of bombs.  
See the stockmarket boom  
From slaughter of children,  
From torture of mothers,  
From twisted bodies of men.  
See, striding over the earth  
Red hate, black fear  
And the white lynch-madness,  
Lynching not man by man,  
But nation by nation.  
See smug men praising God  
For man's death-rattle—

Mocking your insolent prate  
Of thankfulness!"

I said: "Yet there is thanks  
For the urge in man  
That wars forever  
Against chains,  
That bears forever  
Life  
From the pits of death.  
There is thanks  
For Brotherhood  
That widens down generations,  
Enfolding the family first  
Then clan and nation  
And now . . . now . . .  
Breaking the bounds of nations.  
Even from the white madness  
We tear new birth.  
For as aggression  
Grows worldwide  
So also  
The cry of understanding  
From man to man  
Grows worldwide.  
The people's brotherhood  
Grows worldwide,  
As a seed, planted in darkness,  
Twists through torturing rocks,  
Sending roots far  
To many hidden springs  
And upthrusts  
To a great tree,  
So also Brotherhood shall grow  
A shade-tree  
For the peoples.

## The Christmas Story

This is the Christmas story  
Of a CHILD  
And a KING  
And three INTELLECTUALS  
And some PEASANTS.  
It is a true story;  
It happens all the time.

### I

The CHILD was born  
To a carpenter's family,  
In a stranger's barn.  
He brought the gifts  
That children bring  
To our weary earth:  
Infinite love,  
Infinite hope,  
And a dream  
In his mother's soul  
Of earth made safe for babies,  
A world like a big family.

### II

The KING in his palace  
Heard of the Child,  
And the dream  
Of the Human Family,  
So he sent soldiers  
To kill that baby.  
For tyrants  
Fear dreams like these  
And carpenter's children  
That bring them.

### III

The three INTELLECTUALS  
Sought very far

Over wide deserts  
Of dust and sage.  
They hunted  
Even in the King's court.  
They spent much time  
And came late.  
But they reached their goal  
At the cradle  
Of the workingman's child,  
And gladly gave their treasure.

### IV

The PEASANTS  
Were out in the hills at night,  
Watching their sheep  
And talking by the fire,  
When there came from the stars  
A Vision  
Of "Peace on Earth,  
Goodwill among Men."  
And, being happy about it,  
They ran to the barn  
To see the new babe  
And promise the mother  
What a brave new world  
It would be  
When her baby grew up.

### V

And mothers still pray for it,  
And despots would kill it,  
And wise men seek for it  
And peasants hail it:  
The hope of a Human Family  
Safe  
For the Child.

## The Turn of the Year

### I

Now  
Is the turn of the year  
At Christmas-time.  
These are the darkest days  
When autumn's dead leaves,  
Beaten by the rain,  
Tossed by the wind,  
Are rotted down at last  
Into new soil  
For growth that is to be.  
Now is the time when the sun  
Turns north again  
Bringing the longed-for spring.  
O, there are many days  
Of winter yet to be,  
The coldest of the year,  
The windiest of the year,  
When ice grips deep on the rivers  
And the promise of spring  
Seems dead.  
But on every storm-lashed mountain,  
To every frozen valley,  
The turn of the year has come.  
And this do men take  
As the sign:  
That, minute by measured minute,  
The hours of the sun are growing.  
And day by day  
The darkness lessens,  
And day by day  
The light grows more.

### II

Now  
Is the turn of the age,  
Earth's Christmas-time.  
These are the darkest years  
When old systems,  
Old customs,  
Old ways of thinking  
Are beaten and rotted down,  
Soil for an age to be.  
Now is the time when hope  
Turns north at last,  
Leading the march of spring.  
O, there are many storms  
Of winter yet to be,  
The coldest,  
The fiercest,  
The grimmest,—  
For men shall die  
In those blizzards,  
Where ice grips deep on the stream.  
But to every storm-lashed mountain,  
In every frozen valley,  
The turn of the age has come.  
And this shall men take  
As the sign:  
That the sense  
Of the People's Power  
Is flashing from nation to nation.  
And day by day  
The darkness lessens,  
And day by day  
The light grows more.



## The Young Year

### I

I dreamed I saw  
The Young Year  
Slipping down through space,  
With a chest of gifts  
On his straight, young back  
And hope  
In his face.  
And I cried: What  
Have you brought to earth?  
Will you give us peace?  
Will you finish  
All these weary wars?  
Will brotherhood increase?  
Then a million children cried:  
"O, Year!  
Have you brought us food?  
We have asked six years  
To give us milk,  
But none of them could."  
And a million mothers  
Tried to ask,  
But stopped,  
Half-choked with sobs.  
And a million men said, grimly:  
"O, Year!  
Have you brought us JOBS?"

### II

I dreamed I saw  
The Young Year  
Grow pale with sudden fright.  
And from his face  
The smile fled,  
And from his eyes the light.  
He set his chest

Upon the ground  
It looked so very small.  
He cried:  
"What is it they expect?  
Have I—to do it ALL?"  
And then  
He squared his shoulders  
And said: "I do not see  
What RIGHT you have  
To ask so much.  
What are YOU giving ME?"  
He looked around the earth  
So torn  
By famine, pest and shell.  
"Am I  
To bring you heaven?" he said  
"When you have brought me—  
Hell?"

### III

I dreamed I saw  
The Young Year  
Grow old before mine eyes.  
He dropped his wings,  
He took his staff.  
Grim will  
Replaced that joyous laugh.  
Both hope and fear  
Had fled from him  
And left him stern and wise.  
He bent  
Above the old year's grave  
And shouldered all the load.  
"Oh, I can lead you far," he said,  
But YOU  
Must build the road."